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Devil Inside

By Dan Avery

Reichen Lehmkuhl reveals the bare truth about *Dante's Cove*



Dante's Cove, here! TV's flagship series, is like a patchwork of our favorite cable channels—combining the campy pathos of a Lifetime movie and LOGO's queer characters with the raunchy encounters of a late-night Cinemax skin flick. In its current third season, *Dante's* producers brought on some familiar faces, including openly gay Adonis Reichen Lehmkuhl—best known for his antics in the real world (including an on-again, off-again relationship with a certain boy-bander). Speaking with us from his San Francisco hotel room, the reality star-actor-model-jewelry designer-Air Force captain-activist dished on his clean-cut character, being in the buff at 40,000 feet and why he lets his inner drag queen out once a year.

HX: So, have you read Lance Bass' new autobiography, *Out of Sync*?

Reichen Lehmkuhl: That's not really something I want to talk about.

Okay then! How did you hook up with *Dante's Cove* ?

I went on an audition a few years ago for an earlier season of *Dante's* and they actually offered me a part. I couldn't do it because I was still obligated to do *The Reichen Show* on Q Television, which has since gone under. So last year they called me up about a new character they were adding in season three. It was an immediate "yes" for me—I couldn't wait.

Tell us about your character, Trevor.

He's this straight-laced newcomer who gets wrapped up in the sexual aspect of the island. But he's kind of skeptical about the whole witchcraft thing. By the end of the season, though, he'll have to be a believer. Right now he's finding his way. He has his little hookups, but I think he connects most with Grace [played by Tracy Scoggins]. In a nonsexual way, of course! My best days were working with Tracy. She's a total professional—I learned a lot from her—but it's also fun to watch her really take it over the top.

Have you had any experiences with the paranormal?

Well, when I was little I lost a close family member and for years after that, I felt like he was around me. Looking back, I don't know if that was something supernatural or just my imagination.

Was it difficult joining a show that's already been up and running for two years?

It was all in my head. I was nervous about being the new guy, but literally after the first day it was obvious everyone was going to take care of me and make me feel welcome—on set and off. I have to say, it's nice having some stability. Coming from the military, I have a real problem in Hollywood because there's this total lack of structure. You never know what you'll be working on from day to day—whether you're auditioning or doing a personal appearance or a phone interview. I'm really enjoying having a series now—especially since we shot it on the North Shore of Hawaii.

What about the sex scenes?

I'd done nudity before in *The Scorned*, but I'd never done a sex scene. I was a little nervous, but it's so choreographed you feel protected. The actors are still human—we still feel weird about being naked in front of a room full of people. The directors do a lot with angles and shots so you're really not seeing what you maybe think you are.

You can't be too uncomfortable with nudity—you call your jewelry line **Fly Naked with Reichen.**

[Laughs] That comes from my Air Force pilot training days. As a rite of passage you're supposed to strip down for your first solo flight and literally fly naked. I always felt like it was my mantra, you know? Living the truth and letting people know who you really are.

Speaking of nudity, all the guys on *Dante's* are in amazing shape. Did you boys ever get competitive about your workouts?

Nah, it's a really noncompetitive cast, which is good because yeah, the guys are in great shape. I worked out in the gym at the resort we stayed at. But when someone's in better shape, I think it just spurs everyone else on to do better. I'm proud of anyone who's in better shape than me!

Do you dress up for Halloween?

Oh yeah, that's my holiday. I always start out with the idea of being a seven-foot-tall woman and then create a costume around that. Last year I was a bodacious nun with big breasts and ruby-red lipstick. This year, my partner Ryan and I are gonna be nurses, and then I think I'll be a Catholic schoolgirl at some point, too.

A nun and a schoolgirl? Something tells me you must've been raised Catholic.
[Laughs] Yep, I was a Catholic schoolgirl in real life.

Season 3 of Dante's Cove now on here! TV. heretv.com.